

Refugees Made Scapegoats, Once Again

News:

Countries neighbouring the still rumbling Syrian war are rounding up hundreds of workers and sending many back to volatile parts of the country, raising fears of mass deportations that will imperil large numbers of refugees.

Syrians living in Istanbul and Beirut have been targeted by immigration authorities in recent weeks, with more than 1,000 detained in Turkey's biggest city last weekend and given 30 days to leave. (Guardian 29/07/2019)

Comment:

Turkey and Lebanon initially opened their doors to refugees fleeing Syria. Now that the conflict is dragging on and they are facing their own economic crisis, problems due to poor infrastructure and domestic issue of all kinds, it is easy to blame refugees and to divert the root cause of issues onto this crisis.

Both in Lebanon and Turkey, it is reported that locals are feeding into the rhetoric that migrants take local jobs and make it difficult for the Turkish and Lebanese in the job market. This allows a public sentiment to accept the deportation of refugees, despite Syria being unsafe and still ruled by a despotic regime.

The same can be said of the fate of the people of Palestine who fled to Jordan and Lebanon, the the people of Afghanistan in Pakistan, the Rohingya in Bangladesh and anyone who is so desperate in any land of conflict that they sought refuge with their nearest neighbours. Leaving their own homes for the unknown and then facing uncertainty is the hallmark of the refugee crisis all over the world.

There are two main areas to consider. Firstly, why do we see Muslims who need our assistance as 'others', 'foreign' and a 'burden'? Secondly, without these refugees will the Muslim countries really improve?

For the first part, the idea of one Ummah cannot be simple lip service, where from afar we assist but we do not want our lives to be affected by the hardship of others. The notion of 'our country', 'our borders' and 'our economy' come from both a patriotic and nationalist bond that serves no place for a Muslim who knows his loyalty is to Allah and the Muslims, no matter what their background.

Secondly, despite the strain an influx of people may initially have, the real cause of our economic crisis is that all Muslim countries are subservient to the Capitalist system that is the cause of our sorry state in terms of the economy. The lands where refugees have gone to have ample scope for job creation and potential for more industry and growth but they are all restrained by economic policies that strangle and choke us all. Does Turkey not have the potential for economic growth in all areas? It is a huge land mass with agriculture and potential for other industries. Lebanon is also ripe for more economic activity if only the correct ideological thought was guiding the economy.

All Muslim countries today are only thinking inside the box of the dominant Capitalist framework. They look at their land only and allow the false borders to dictate their laws and policies and how they see others, that is why the most vulnerable are being used as scapegoats and looking deeply into the real cause and correct solution is not being done. We should not feed into this false narrative that is against our Deen and we should assist our Muslim brothers and sisters in their time of need. We should also look at each crisis as a way to examine what the correct Islamic ideological viewpoint and solution is.

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